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A COMPANION

IN A VISIT TO

NETLEY ABBEY:

TO WHICH IS ANNEXED,

NETLEY ABBEY;

AN ELEGY:

BY GEORGE KEATE, ESQ.

A Monarch bade my cloiſter'd fanes aſcend,
Severe Religion's haunt. At Henry's voice,
The baniſh'd cowl gave place, and left my ſeats
To coronets, and nobles throne-allied.——
Now on my ſcatter'd towers ſtern Ruin ſits,
And grimly ſmiles at Time's obſcuring hand;
While my rent pillars, and my ivied arches,
Preach the viciſſitudes of human things.

Southampton;
PRINTED & SOLD BY T. BAKER, IN THE HIGH-STREET:
SOLD ALSO AT THE ABBEY.
1800.

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ADVERTISEMENT.

ANNEXED to the preſent little work, is Mr. Keate's admired Elegy, entitled Netley Abbey. Thirty years having elapſed ſince the laſt edition of the poem, it was ſeldom to be met with ſeparate from the author's other works. Being frequently inquired after in this neighbourhood, it was reſolved to reprint it. But as many particulars might be added to the ſhort account of the abbey originally prefixed to the poem, it was judged proper to collect them, and to throw the whole into a new form. The preſent attempt aſks for the candour of the reader. It pretends not to depth of reſearch. Should any diſcover errors, or be able to communicate information, their ſuggeſtions are reſpectfully ſolicited, and ſhall be immediately attended to, if communicated to the publiſher.

A

COMPANION, &c.

THE viſitants of Southampton ſeldom make any conſiderable ſtay at that place, without ſurveying the ruins of Netley Abbey. Some prefer taking a boat thither from the quay at Southampton; which is but a pleaſant diſtance. Others chooſe the walk; which lies through delightfully varied fields and woods, and is embelliſhed with water views.

Thoſe who take boat for Netley, at Southampton Quay, are entertained, as they ſail along, by the fine ſcenery of the bay; which is an arm of the ſea, receiving the waters of the Teſt and Itchen. The Teſt diſcharges its ſtream

at Redbridge, four miles above Southampton; after having watered in its courſe the towns of Stockbridge and Romſey. It has its ſource near Whitchurch. In ſailing towards Netley, we paſs the mouth of the Itchen; which river, riſing at Cheriton, a few miles from Alresford, ſupplies the ancient city of Wincheſter, is thence navigable for barges as far as Wood-mill, and afterwards becomes ſalt, being met by the tide. Both rivers abound with fine ſalmons; which, through the preſent facility of land carriage, are ſent to the London markets, few of them being ſold in this neighbourhood; though formerly Southampton was ſo fully ſupplied with this delicious fiſh, that it is ſaid to have been ſtipulated in the indentures of apprentices, that their maſters ſhould not oblige them to eat it oftener than thrice a week.

Southampton Water (for ſo is the eſtuary named, into which the Teſt and Itchen diſcharge themſelves) furniſhes plentiful ſupplies of fiſh, and abounds with wholeſome oyſters; large quantities of which are purchaſed by the London dealers. Sometimes alſo porpoiſes (which are very common on the coaſts of the Iſle of Wight) come thus far in purſuit of their prey.

prey. And occaſionally the grampus and the unwieldy whale have bent their courſe this way. When this, however, is the caſe, they are ſeldom permitted to return. The fiſhermen, appriſed of ſuch an arrival, eagerly prepare for the purſuit; and happy is he who firſt can plunge the harpoon into the treſpaſſer's ſides. His toil is abundantly rewarded. He drags the animal to the ſhore; and after having made his profit of the curioſity of the neighbourhood, by exhibiting him as a ſhow, derives conſiderable gain from the oil which his carcaſs affords.

As we ſail to Netley, we have views of the village of Hythe, the woody diſtrict in its neighbourhood, the ſeat of —— Tate, eſq., Cadland, the ſeat of Robert Drummond, eſq., Fawley Church, and, at the extremity of the land, Calſhot Caſtle, built by Henry VIII. for the defence of the harbour. We have alſo views of the Itchen, its ſloping banks, Woolſton Houſe, the woods of that manor which edge the river, and Netley Fort. On landing, we have a pictureſque view of Southampton. The abbey is now but at a ſhort diſtance; and as we riſe to it from the ſhore, its appearance is ſtriking.

Thoſe who prefer walking from Southampton to the abbey, will find the diſtance rather more than three miles. Quitting the town, our road lies along Southampton Beach, on the margin of the bay; a very agreeable walk, but moſt enjoyed at full tide; when the water graces the ſcenery. In all theſe views the Iſle of Wight forms a good back-ground.

At Itchen Ferry we obſerve a ſmall building, which, from its form, has obtained the name of the Croſs-Houſe. It has four different diviſions, correſponding with the points of the compaſs; in which perſons obliged to wait for the ferry-boat, may ſhelter themſelves from the weather. The tradition which pretends to account for its origin, aſcribes it to the donation of a lady, who, in waiting for the boat, before any ſuch building exiſted, contracted a cold which occaſioned her death. But the arms of Southampton, which are to be ſeen in one of the quarters, ſeem rather to point it out as a public work. Its date is 1634.

After croſſing Itchen Ferry, we are directed, by a ſtile on the right, to the entrance of our road, which riſes from the ſhore into a ſmall coppice: at the upper end, we have

a good

a good view of Southampton. The field to which the pathway leads us, is a ſwelling piece of land, edged with woody ſcreens, which admit various water views through their openings. After croſſing the next ſtile, and enjoying the ſcenery of a little marſhy valley on our right, commonly grazed with cattle, and admitting a view of the water at its termination, we aſcend the neglected lawn in front of Woolſton Houſe; the property of Nathaniel Dance, eſq., who ſeldom reſides in it, notwithſtanding its agreeable ſituation.

Having paſſed the next ſtile and field, with a quiet bottom, through which a ſtream murmurs, and aſcended the hill in front, we have various water views; and on the left we diſtinguiſh, among the trees, the cottage of Miſs Short, in the hamlet of Weſton. This is an inconſiderable place, principally inhabited by fiſhermen. Our path leads us acroſs Weſton Lane, and over a gate; which conducts us through four fields, by no means deſtitute of pleaſing ſcenery, to the entrance of Weſt Wood, a fine plantation, of about a hundred acres, belonging to Woolſton Manor.

The walk is now highly beautiful. The

cloſeneſs of the trees ſhuts out diſtant proſpects, and makes it altogether a ſylvan ſcene:

"Where they whom Wiſdom and whom Nature charm,
Stealing themſelves from the degenerate crowd,
May ſooth the throbbing paſſions into peace,
And woo lone quiet in her ſilent walks."

At the gate which terminates Weſt Wood, we have our firſt view of the abbey. Its low and ſecluded ſituation does not allow it to be ſeen at a diſtance. The weſt window, which is the principal object in this quarter, is at preſent much leſs beautiful than heretofore, when it was crowned with a moſt luxuriant growth of ivy; which was deſtroyed by a ſevere winter, a few years ſince.

On approaching the abbey, the guide is uſually ſent for, who is to be found at the neighbouring farm; to which a road at the end of the field, in which the abbey is ſituated, conducts. He provides tea for thoſe who wiſh to enjoy the pleaſure of taking it in the abbey.

Previous to any deſcription of Netley Abbey, we will communicate what we have been able to collect of its hiſtory.

Its preſent name of Netley, is corrupted from its original very appropriate appellation, Letley,---

Letley,---formed from the Latin "*Lætus Locus*," ---*Pleaſant Place*; which ſo exactly applies to its ſituation. * It alſo occurs under the name of Edwardſtow, or St. Edward's Place. †

Tanner informs us, that, in the year 1239, King Henry III. founded this abbey as a monaſtery for Ciſtercian monks (whom he brought hither from the neighbouring abbey of Beaulieu), and dedicated it to the Virgin Mary, ‡ endowing it with various manors in the neighbourhood, and with the advowſon of Schyre church.

* Abbatia de *Læto Loco*.—Dugdale, Harpsfield, &c.

† In the title of the founder's charter, it is called Letley, but in the charter itſelf, "the church of St. Mary of Edwardſtow,"—"eccleſia Sanctæ Mariæ de loco Sancti Edwardi."

‡ Tanner ſays that Henry recommended it to the patronage of St. Mary and St. Edward. "That it was dedicated to the former of theſe," obſerves Mr. Keate, "is ſufficiently plain from the charter of King Henry; but that it was at any time conſecrated to the latter, ſtill remains to be proved. The words of the king's charter run thus,—"Confirmamus Deo et eccleſiæ Sanctæ Mariæ de loco Sancti Edwardi;" which implies no more than a grant to St. Mary's chapel at *Edwardſtow*, or *St. Edward's Place*. It is not improbable," continues he, "as Letley had been enriched by donations previous to that of its laſt founder, that ſome ſtructure had been raiſed there before, by Edward, or was conſecrated to him, and that Henry only renewed the foundation, as he afterwards rebuilt Weſtminſter Abbey; which (as this might have been) was the work of the Confeſſor, his favourite ſaint."——On the ſtones which now lie on the ground in the ſouth tranſept of the church, which, a few years ſince, were part of its elegant roof, are to be traced the ſuppoſed arms of Edward the Confeſſor: which, the antiquaries inform us, were, a croſs flory, and four martlets.——Vide Milner's Hiſtory of Wincheſter, vol. ii. p. 206.

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The diſcipline of the Ciſtercian order was extremely ſevere; and theſe monks would have paſſed their lives in miſery, had they ſtrictly conformed to the injunctions of their founder. * They were to wear no ſhirts; to eat no kind of fleſh, except in ſickneſs; to lie upon ſtraw beds, in tunics and cowls; to riſe at midnight to prayers; to ſpend the day in labour, reading, and prayer; and in all their exerciſes to obſerve a continual ſilence. Their habit was a white robe in the nature of a caſſock, with a black ſcapulary and hood, and was girt with a woollen girdle.

But let not the reader imagine, that all theſe ſons of ſecluſion were over careful to

* This was one Robert, abbot of Moleſme; who, in the eleventh century, withdrew from the Benedictines on account of their irregularities, and, with one-and-twenty more, founded this order in the ſolitudes of Citeaux, five leagues from the city of Dijon, in Burgundy.——D'Emilliane's Hiſtory of Monaſtic Orders.—Encyclopædia.——It is amuſing to hear how the jolly monks of Clugny, whoſe diſcipline was very lax, deride the ſeverity of the Ciſtercians:——"A new race of Phariſees!" ſay they: "You are the ſaints; you are the rare men; you are the only monks in the world; you muſt have a new colour of your own (alluding to their garments); you muſt be the white boys, when all the reſt muſt paſs for black ſheep. And no colour," they add, "could have been worſe choſen for ſuch whining companions; ſince white is the colour of joy and feaſting, and black of mourning and ſadneſs."——Exord. Ordin. Ciſterc. c. 5. in Biblioth. Ciſtercienſ. Sigeb. Chron. ad A. D. 1098.——Stillingfleet's Anſwer to Creſſy, p. 196.

obſerve

obſerve the regulations of their founder. Convents were frequently found to require expurgatory viſits from their dioceſan. And where is the wonder, when we conſider that many of theſe monaſtics, taking up their profeſſion for the ſake of a livelihood, grew weary of theſe tireſome obſervances; vain and unprofitable indeed, ſuch as Scripture knows nothing of, and ſuch therefore as can never be acceptable to Him, who ſaid to the proud religioniſts of his own time,---"In vain do ye worſhip me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men."

Although Henry III. is ſaid to have founded Netley Abbey in 1239, his charter, confirming its poſſeſſions and revenues, is dated ſo much later as the thirty-fifth year of his reign; which was not till 1251. In 1242, three years after Tanner's date of the foundation, and nine before that of Henry's charter, Roger de Clare endowed it with certain territories; and as the advowſon of Schyre church, mentioned in his grant, is repeated in that of Henry III., it ſeems not improbable, that the king's charter was partly in confirmation of ſome grants made during

during the time he was engaged in ſettling the foundation. *

Edmund, Earl of Cornwall, and Robert Ver, are alſo in the liſt of benefactors to this abbey; † as is Walter de Burg; ‡ who gave it certain poſſeſſions in the county of Lincoln; which he held of the king in capite, by the ſervice of preſenting him a head-piece lined with fine linen, and a pair of gilt ſpurs. §

* Roger de Clare's grant was ratified by John de Warrenna, Earl of Surry, in 1252. The original grant from Roger de Clare, coſt the abbey 500 marks ſterling; and the ratification by John de Warrenna, 20 more. There ſeems to be ſome difficulty in this part of the hiſtory; ſince, from theſe circumſtances, the grants appear rather under the terms of ſale than donation.——Copies of the charters are given in Dugdale's Monaſticon; and they have alſo been reprinted in Warner's Topographical Remarks on Hampſhire, vol. ii. append. No. 14, 15.——A ſkilful antiquary might probably elucidate the buſineſs.

† Leland's Collect. i. 69.

‡ Abbas de Netele tenet in Scargerthorp, Bekingham, et Sutton in Com. Lincoln, quoddam manerium cum pertin. quod habet de dono Walteri de Burgo, qui illud tenuit de domino rege in capite, per ſervitium reddendi domino regi unam capellam lineatam de ſyndone, et unum par calcarium deauratorum pro omni ſervitio.——Pla. de libertat. et quo war. 9 E. 1. Lincoln.——Blount's Ancient Tenures, p. 64.

§ Godwin ſays that Peter de Rupibus, Biſhop of Wincheſter, was inſtrumental in the foundation of Netley Abbey; but we know not in what manner he could have aſſiſted in the work; ſince he died in 1233, ſix years before the earlieſt date of the foundation.——Mat. Paris.——Milner's Hiſt. Win. i. 243.

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The learned hiſtorian of Wincheſter thinks it evident, from traces he has obſerved among Netley ruins, that Richard Fox, Biſhop of Wincheſter in the time of Henry VII., was one of its benefactors. *

The following is a liſt of thoſe of its abbots whoſe names have been preſerved:

Robert - - - - - - - -	1255
Walter - - - - - - - -	1290
Henry de Ingleſham - -	1371
John Stelhard - - - -	1374
Philip de Cornhampton -	1387
John de Glouceſter - -	
Richard Middletone - -	1400 †
Thomas - - - - - - -	1527;

who ſigned (by his proxy, the abbot de Graciis, in London) the inſtrument in favour of the divorce between Henry VIII. and Catherine his queen. ‡ This perſon continued probably the abbot of Netley till the diſſolution, in 1538; at which period the monaſtery conſiſted of himſelf and twelve monks; whoſe poſſeſſions

* Milner's Hiſt. Win. i. 320.—This biſhop's arms and choſen device was the pelican.

† Vide Willis's Additi. ad Calc. Tanner's Not. Mon.

‡ Fiddes's Life of Wolſey, append. p. 158.

amounted

amounted to 100l. 1s. 8d. per annum, according to Dugdale; and to 160l. 2s. 9¾d. according to Speed. *

Thus the hiſtory of Netley is very brief. None of its monks appear to have been renowned for their literature, or canonized for their fruitleſs auſterities.

"We ſhall form but a low idea," obſerves Mr. Warner, "of the erudition of this fraternity, at the time of the ſuppreſſion, when we find that the *only book* their library could then boaſt, was "Rhetorica Ciceronis." †

The ſummary way in which Henry VIII. diſſolved the religious foundations ſo long eſtabliſhed in the kingdom, has drawn upon him the univerſal hatred of Papiſts. And ſometimes the Proteſtant antiquary has been ready to join with them in execrating his memory, on account of the many impediments which that monarch's avaricious zeal has thrown in the way of his favourite ſtudy. Few will pretend to vindicate Henry's *motives*; many, who

* Warner's Top. Rem. i. 294.

† Leland's Collect. i. 149. Warner's Top. Rem. i. 295.

ſee

ſee little to be admired in his character, but who are accuſtomed to trace the wonderful movements of Divine Providence, will look upon him as an inſtrument of the higheſt benefit to this favoured land. His conduct will bring to the memory of ſome, that Aſſyrian monarch, who became the accompliſher of the purpoſes of heaven, while it was ſaid of him, by One who knew his heart,---"Howbeit, he meaneth not ſo."

A public-ſpirited writer * has hinted at the propriety there would have been, in converting the monaſteries of our anceſtors into ſchools for the inſtruction of youth, or in applying them to other uſeful purpoſes. This certainly would have been a method of diſpoſing of them worthy of a king.

To thoſe who have been inclined to regret the diſſolution of monaſteries, on account of the hoſpitality to ſtrangers, and the liberality to the poor, which ſome of them exerciſed, we will offer a candid ſtatement of the caſe, from the pen of an elegant writer.

* Hanway's Eight Days' Journey.

He is ſpeaking of Glaſtonbury Abbey; which poſſeſſed the ampleſt revenues of any religious houſe in England. "Its fraternity," ſays he, "is ſaid to have conſiſted of five hundred eſtabliſhed monks, beſides nearly as many retainers on the abbey. Above four hundred children were not only educated in it, but entirely maintained. Strangers from all parts of Europe were liberally received, claſſed according to their ſex and nation, and might conſider the hoſpitable roof, under which they lodged, as their own. Five hundred travellers, with their horſes, have been lodged at once within its walls. While the poor, from every ſide of the country, waited the ringing of the alms-bell; when they flocked in crowds, young and old, to the gate of the monaſtery; where they received, every morning, a plentiful proviſion for themſelves and their families:---all this appears great and noble.

"On the other hand, when we conſider five hundred perſons bred up in indolence, and loſt to the commonwealth; when we conſider that theſe houſes were the great nurſeries of ſuperſtition, bigotry, and ignorance; the ſtews of ſloth, ſtupidity, and perhaps intemperance;

temperance; when we conſider that the education received in them had not the leaſt tincture of uſeful learning, good manners, or true religion, but tended rather to vilify and diſgrace the human mind; when we conſider that the pilgrims and ſtrangers who reſorted thither, were idle vagabonds, who got nothing abroad that was equivalent to the occupations they left at home; and when we conſider, laſtly, that indiſcriminate alms-giving is not real charity, but an avocation from labour and induſtry, checking every idea of exertion, and filling the mind with abject notions, we are led to acquieſce in the fate of theſe foundations, and view their ruins, not only with a pictureſque eye, but with moral and religious ſatisfaction." *

The ſite of Netley Abbey was granted by Henry VIII., in 1537, to Sir William Paulet,---a gentleman high in his favour; who is ſaid to have been ſingularly accompliſhed with learning and excellent parts.

Under this king, he was ſucceſſively comptroller and treaſurer of the houſehold, and maſter of the wards. In the twenty-fifth year

* Gilpin's Obſervations on the Weſtern Parts of England, pp. 138, 139.

of his reign, he was ſent with the Duke of Norfolk, to attend Francis I. of France, in his intended interview with the Pope, at Marſeilles. In the thirtieth, he was advanced to the dignity of a baron, by the title of Lord St. John of Baſing. Five years after, he was elected a knight companion of the order of the garter. In 1544, he accompanied Henry at the taking of Boulogne.

He was appointed one of the king's executors, and one of the council to Edward VI.; in the third year of whoſe reign he was created Earl of Wiltſhire; in the fourth made lord high treaſurer of England; and in the fifth advanced to the title of Marquis of Wincheſter.

On the firſt of December, 1551, he ſat as lord high ſteward, on the trial of the good Duke of Somerſet.

He appears to have been a principal inſtrument in defeating the Duke of Northumberland's deſign, in ſetting Lady Jane Grey on the throne; and for this ſervice both Mary and Elizabeth continued him in the office of lord high treaſurer; which, notwithſtanding the changeful times, he held during thirty years.

Being

Being aſked how he had contrived to keep his ſituation through ſo many alterations of government, he replied,---"By being a *willow* and not an *oak*,"---a character ſcarcely creditable to any man, greatly beneath the dignity of a *noble* mind, and bearing ſome degree of reſemblance to that of his verſatile contemporary, the pliant Vicar of Bray.

He died in the year 1572, at the advanced age of ninety-ſeven, at his ſeat of Baſing, in this county; which he had built. Before his death, he ſaw one hundred and three perſons deſcended from him. *

From the next information we can obtain reſpecting Netley, it appears to have been one of the appendages to the earldom of Hertford, or barony of Beauchamp; to which it probably belonged by purchaſe. † Edward Seymour,

* Camden's Hiſtory of Elizabeth.——Collins's Peerage, vol. i. pp. 235, 236.——Godwin's Annals of Queen Mary.

† "At ſuch a diſtance of time," obſerves Mr. Keate, "it is become impoſſible, with any degree of certainty, to account for the means by which eſtates ſo often changed their poſſeſſors; as many of the ſmaller channels, through which ſucceſſion naturally devolved, or was by force diverted, are cloſed by time. Under ſuch diſadvantages, could the ſearch be revived, we ſhould remember, the taſk muſt be more often undertaken in obedience to the caprice of fruitleſs curioſity, than executed to the ſatisfaction of rational inquiry."

heir to this title, and ſon of the illuſtrious Duke of Somerſet (who was beheaded in the reign of Edward VI.), was however deprived of it, while a minor, through the contrivance of his enemies, by an act paſſed in the ſixth year of Edward VI; by which the ſaid titles, with lands of great yearly value, were given to the crown. But when Elizabeth came to the throne, in the firſt year of her reign, immediately before her coronation, ſhe reſtored to him theſe poſſeſſions, with the titles of Earl of Hertford and Baron Beauchamp. *

About two years after, in the month of Auguſt, 1560, Queen Elizabeth viſited this manſion, then the reſidence of the Earl of Hertford; its name being altered to Netley Caſtle. † That nobleman, no doubt, uſed every endeavour to entertain his royal miſtreſs; to whom he was under ſuch great obligations.

* Camden's Annals of Elizabeth.—Collins's Peerage, vol. i. p. 186.

† By an entry in the regiſter of St. Michael's pariſh, Southampton, we are informed, that "the Queen's Majeſty's Grace came from the Caſtle of Netley to Southampton, on the thirteenth day of Auguſt; and ſhe went from thence to the city of Wincheſter, on the ſixteenth day, 1560."——This particular was communicated by an intelligent friend, to whom it had occurred in inſpecting the above regiſter.

Not

Not long after this, however, the earl felt the effects of Elizabeth's diſpleaſure. He had privately married Lady Catherine Grey, ſiſter of the amiable and lamented Lady Jane, who was beheaded. Catherine, being diſcovered to be pregnant, was committed to the tower; and on confeſſing her marriage with the Earl of Hertford, he was immediately ſummoned from France, whither he had gone for his pleaſure, and alſo put under confinement. Here the lady was delivered of her firſt ſon, and afterwards of another; the earl having procured opportunities of viſiting her, by bribing the lieutenant of the tower. Notwithſtanding his having alleged that he was really married to Lady Catherine, the Star Chamber dealt with him as if he had violated a virgin of the blood royal; ſentencing him to a fine of 15,000l., and an impriſonment of nine years. His lady was kept in priſon till death releaſed her, Jan. 26, 1567. The validity of the marriage being afterwards tried at common law, the miniſter who performed the ceremony being preſent, and other circumſtances agreeing, the jury found it a good marriage. *

* Collins's Peerage, i. 186, 187.—Camden's Annals of Eliz.

This

This earl was afterwards twice married. In the third year of James I. (1605), he was, with much importunity, prevailed on to go ambaſſador to the Arch-Duke, for confirming a peace. He died in 1621, and was buried in Saliſbury cathedral. * His eldeſt ſon died before him, leaving a ſon William, who, on the death of his grandfather, ſucceeded to his titles and eſtates.

This nobleman received his education in Magdalen College, Oxford. In 1640, Charles I. advanced him to the dignity of Marquis of Hertford, and appointed him governor to the young Prince of Wales. In the grand rebellion he faithfully adhered to his royal maſter; who made him lieutenant general of all his forces in the counties of Wilts, Hants, Dorſet, &c. In 1643, he was elected chancellor of the univerſity of Oxford, and in the ſame year was appointed groom of the ſtole to the king. Throughout the civil wars, he attended King Charles, diſtinguiſhing himſelf on ſeveral occaſions. His attachment continued to that monarch even

* Collins, i. 187.—Camden's Annals of James I.

in

in his death; when he obtained a licence from the parliament to bury the king's body.

During the uſurpation, he was diſmiſſed from being chancellor of the univerſity; but was reinſtated immediately before the reſtoration.

On the king's arrival at Dover, the Marquis of Hertford was among thoſe who met him. The next day his majeſty gave him the garter, at the ſame time that he gave it to General Monk and the Earl of Southampton. In 1660, he alſo reſtored to him the family title of Duke of Somerſet. In the ſame year this loyal nobleman died; and was buried at Great Bedwin, in Wiltſhire. *

It is ſomewhat ſingular, that two different poſſeſſors of Netley ſhould have drawn on themſelves royal diſpleaſure, on account of matrimonial connexions with ladies related to the crown. The nobleman we have laſt ſpoken of, married, for his firſt wife, the Lady Arabella Stuart; but King James I. diſapproving the match, which was concluded without his conſent, he was committed to the tower, and ſhe confined to her houſe at High-

* Collins, i. 188, 189.

gate.

gate. Her huſband, however, in 1611, found means to eſcape to Dunkirk; but Lady Arabella, attempting the ſame, was overtaken, and committed to the tower; where ſhe died, without iſſue, in 1615. *

After Netley became a dwelling-houſe, it appears that the church, or at leaſt a part of it, ſtill remained ſet apart for religious purpoſes; ſince we find that the lady of Francis Lord Seymour (a younger branch of the Hertford family) lay in there of Charles Lord Seymour, ſecond baron of Troubridge; who was chriſtened in the chapel. †

The abbey is ſaid to have been afterwards in poſſeſſion of an Earl of Huntingdon; at what exact period is uncertain (though the connexion between the Huntingdon and Seymour families may be accounted for); ‡ who made uſe of it as a place of reſidence. In this ſtate it is ſuppoſed to have continued till

* Collins, ut ſupra.——Wilſon's Life and Reign of James I.

† This information is Mr. Keate's; who had it from an old interleaved almanack, for the year 1665; which had formerly belonged to a lady of this family; to which Mr. K. was related by deſcent.

‡ Keate.

about

about 1700; when Sir Bartlet Lucy, at that time the owner,* ſold ſome of its materials by contract, to a Mr. Taylor of Southampton.

Taylor's progreſs in dilapidating the abbey, was interrupted by his death. This, and the dream which forewarned him of his fate, are variouſly related. The following are the moſt authentic particulars.

After the concluſion of Mr. Taylor's contract for the materials of the abbey, ſome of his relations, conſidering the bargain as ſacrilegious, urged him not to be inſtrumental in deſtroying an edifice which had been ſet apart for religious purpoſes. Their remonſtrances had not ſufficient effect to deter him from executing his engagement; yet they dwelt on his mind, and were ſuppoſed to occaſion him to dream one night, that the arch key-ſtone of the eaſt † window fell from its ſituation, and fractured his ſkull. He communicated the dream to a friend, who adviſed him to

* Mr. Keate mentions Sir Bartlet Lucy, others ſay the Marquis of Huntingdon.

† So the ſtory has it; but what eaſt window is intended, we know not. The eaſt window of Netley church remains to this day more entire than moſt parts of the ruin.

be

be by no means perſonally concerned in the demolition of the church. Taylor, however, did not think fit to deſiſt: and in an exertion to tear down a board, he looſened the fatal ſtone, which fell upon his head, and produced a fracture. The wound itſelf was not deemed to be mortal; but the inſtrument of the ſurgeon ſlipping, in the operation of extracting a ſplinter, entered the brain, and cauſed immediate death.

Our readers will take this ſtory without comment. We detail it, becauſe it belongs to the abbey.

Netley ruins were afterwards the property of H. Clift, eſq., of whom the late Mr. Dummer purchaſed them; and they at preſent belong to N. Dance, eſq.

"That ſo little ſhould be known," obſerves Mr. Keate, "of thoſe who were in ſucceſſion maſters of a place like this, will not appear unaccountable to him, who conſiders that the owner of an eſtate is the only perſon poſſeſſed of its credentials, or immediately concerned in the preſervation of its records. Thoſe to whom hereditary tenures deſcend, are not often ſolicitous about more than their value,

fitting

ſitting down to enjoy them, with neither the power to extend a ſearch into remoter ages themſelves, or a wiſh to promote inquiries after the number or quality of their predeceſſors. So eaſily is that permitted to be forgotten, which no lucrative views engage us to redeem from obſcurity. The pride of families is not always the beſt ſecurity for the faithfulneſs of genealogical deductions. Greatneſs is leſs ready to diſcloſe the ſources from whence its riches flow, than to ſwallow their ſtreams; and titles of ſplendor, in a pedigree, too often bluſh at their approximation to provident ingenuity, or ſucceſsful trade. Hence it happens, that, in the oſtentatious accounts of families, none but thoſe whoſe names can confer honour in their turn, are admitted to a place; as in contracted maps the little villages are paſſed over, and the road appears to conduct the traveller only through a ſeries of market towns, and cities of extent and fame."

Having detailed what we have been able to collect reſpecting the hiſtory of Netley, the reader will expect us to conduct him through the ruins. We will do our beſt to give him ſatisfaction; though we confeſs it requires

greater ſkill than we pretend to poſſeſs, to be able to elucidate every part of the remaining buildings.

Immediately before the entrance, we obſerve, among the ruins in front, various traces of apartments; ſome of them having fire-places. From the uſe of brick in their conſtruction, it ſhould ſeem that theſe were ſome of the alterations in the original building; which were made when the abbey was converted into a dwelling-houſe. In ſeveral parts of the ruin, indeed, we obſerve repairs with brick; which muſt have been of late dates.

On entering at the great door, we find ourſelves in a ſpacious area, which had formerly the name of the Fountain Court. That ſide of it by which we enter, appears to have been heretofore chambered, and divided into various offices. Such alſo was the left ſide of the court; where, ſome think, the bakery and ovens may ſtill be traced. But to whatever uſes the apartments which formerly belonged to theſe two ſides might have been applied, the traces of them are now extremely obſcure.

On the third ſide, oppoſite the entrance, is the ſouth wall of the church, clothed with an

an exuberance of mantling ivy; through which are ſeen the apertures of the windows, no longer decked with ſtoried glaſs, or contributing by their gloom to fancied devotion. * Along the fourth ſide, range the only apartments that retain any conſpicuous veſtiges of their former uſe.

Not far from the door by which we enter, on the right, a cavity in the wall is pointed out, whence a ponderous cheſt of treaſure is ſaid to have been formerly removed. In the diſcovery of this treaſure, the *dream-inſpiring* influence of Netley was again made evident. The ſubject was a poor huſbandman; who, in

* The idea that gloom is favourable to devotion, has been thus ably combated.——"The darkneſs remarkable in religious buildings of this ſtyle, has been admired as an excellence. It is ſaid to throw the mind into that ſerious temper, which is peculiarly adapted to the indulgence of devotion. Such an effect it may perhaps produce, in a great degree, on minds ſubject to ſuperſtition and fanaticiſm, or ſtrongly influenced by a warm imagination; yet, why light, one of the moſt glorious works of creation, ſhould refrigerate the ardour of religion, in the rational and diſpaſſionate profeſſor of it, no good reaſon can be aſſigned. A religious dimneſs may perhaps be deemed neceſſary by the bigoted inhabitants of the convent and the cloiſter; whoſe minds, it is to be feared, are often as dark as their habitations: but light is cheerful, and cheerfulneſs is the diſpoſition of [true devotion.] If guilt is to be taught to feel contrition by the gloomineſs of the temple, it is to be preſumed, that the pious ſorrow will be as tranſient as the emotion which cauſed it, and which, like other productions of the fancy, muſt be of ſhort continuance."—Knox's Eſſays, No. 79.

the viſions of the night, was repeatedly advertiſed of a certain place in the abbey, wherein riches were concealed. He at length reſolved to attend to the ſuggeſtion; and at the very ſpot which his dream had pointed out, he diſcovered the wealth it had promiſed him. But unluckily forgetting to dream of the moſt prudent method of ſecuring his acquiſition, the countryman's good fortune reached the ears of his maſter; who contrived to ſecure the booty to himſelf, without the toil of dreaming about it.

Entering the firſt door-way on the right, we are brought into a paſſage; from which, turning again to the right, we enter a ſmall ruined apartment; which is remarkable for being the only room on the ground-floor, except the kitchen, and the ruins we have mentioned at the entrance, that has any traces of a fire-place.

The next apartment is generally ſuppoſed to have been the refectory, or dining-room, of the monaſtery. It is about forty-five feet long, and twenty-four in width.

A monaſtic dinner, had it been conducted in ſtrict conformity to the rules, muſt have been

been diſmally formal and unſociable. The abbot was to ſit at the head of the table, the monks below him, in order of ſeniority; while the reader aſcended a pulpit, and read to them a portion of hiſtory or divinity. In the mean time, the monks, with their eyes fixed on the table, were enjoined to liſten in ſilence; and even to drink, to lay aſide their platters, and to roll up their napkins, in a preſcribed order and time.*

But there is little reaſon to ſuppoſe that the dinners of Netley refectory were thus uncomfortable. An old Popiſh writer, lamenting the degeneracy of monaſtic diſcipline, and that of the Ciſtercians among others, confeſſes that in his time there was "nothing of the Scriptures, nothing that concerned men's ſouls, nothing but idle talk and laughing, when the monks met together; and they were declined ſo far from the ſteps of their fathers, that they were become unprofitable." †

* Mon. Ang. in Pref. in Introduc. et tom. ii. p. 955.

† St. Antonin. tit. 16, c. 23, ſ. 1, 2.——Stillingfleet's Anſwer to Creſſy, p. 207.

A poet of the time of Henry VII., who ſatirized the follies and vices of the age, could not omit the hypocriſy of the monks:—

"Hang

The ſmall room immediately adjoining, through which we paſs into the kitchen, has been pointed out as the pantry, or buttery. Two openings in the walls are obſerved; one connecting the kitchen with the pantry, the other communicating between the pantry and refectory; through which proviſions were probably conveyed.

The kitchen is a large vaulted room, about forty-eight feet in length, and eighteen in width. It has obtained the name of the abbot's kitchen. The fire-place is of a curious conſtruction. By the ſide of the kitchen, is a ſubterraneous paſſage, which terminates in a coppice, at a ſhort diſtance from the abbey. It was probably a common ſewer: though its capaciouſneſs has made ſome think it intended for more important purpoſes. Curioſity has led ſeveral to explore it; but they have never made any diſcoveries.

"Hang up the ſcapler, the ames-coule and frocke,
Or other habite of eche religion,
Upon a tree cleane dede, or rotten ſtocke!
Such are thoſe fooles that haue profeſſion,
Leauing their right rule in eache condition;
They bere the habite, the veſture, or the wede,
And eke the name, without the thing in dede."——

Vide Alexander Barclay's Navis Stultifera, firſt printed in 1509.

Returning

Returning from the kitchen, through the rooms we have viſited, we croſs the paſſage, and enter the chapter-houſe; which was once highly elegant, as may be ſeen from the remaining arches. It is about thirty-ſix feet ſquare.

The uſe of the chapter-houſe was for holding religious aſſemblies; in which the ſuperior might addreſs inſtructions and exhortations to the monks, for their ſpiritual improvement. Here alſo the community met to deliberate and decide upon ſuch matters as they had a right to vote in.

Next to this, are two ſmaller rooms; the ſecond of which adjoins the church, and was probably the ſacriſty, where the conſecrated veſſels or moveables were repoſited. There is a handſome niche in the wall, in the bottom of which was a cavity, perhaps for holy water;* but a fellow lately pretending to have dreamed

* Of this it is well known the Papiſts have at all times made great uſe. But Dr. Middleton, in his excellent Demonſtration of the Exact Conformity between Popery and Paganiſm, gives us a ſpecimen of its adminiſtration, beyond the common line of abſurdity; aſſuring us, that he was an eye-witneſs of its being ſprinkled, at the commencement of a new year, *on horſes, aſſes, and other cattle!*—Popery Unmaſked, pp. 10, 11.

of

of money concealed in this place, made an unſeemly gap in the wall with a pick-axe, and, finding nothing, left the broken niche as a monument of his ſtupidity.

We now enter the church, by the ſouth tranſept or croſs-aile; the building having been originally cruciform, though the north tranſept is now deſtroyed. A few years ſince, a part of the elegant roof was to be ſeen; but it has now fallen, and its ruins lie on the ground. Among them various arms and devices may be traced. At the corner of this tranſept, on the right from our entrance, is a ſpiral ſtone ſtair-caſe, which conducts to the upper part.

Netley church, in its preſent ſtate, affords few traces of its priſtine elegance. Fine Gothic pillars and arches, of the ſame kind with thoſe ſtill remaining in the tranſept, ſupported its beautifully ramified roof; while the windows were probably decorated with painted glaſs, and the altar rich with ornaments. The eaſt end retains ſomewhat of its original appearance.

The view of part of the ſouth tranſept, which accompanies the preſent publication, is taken from a ſpot about thirty paces from the ruin

ruin it repreſents, near a tree, on the right, which ſhoots up from a ſingle trunk into two tall ſtems, having a maſs of ruin at its root.

Netley church is about two hundred feet in length, and ſixty broad. When the croſs-aiſles were entire, the breadth at that part appears to have been about one hundred and twenty feet. The roof, when perfect, is ſaid to have had pinnacles, which ſerved as land-marks.

Now we are in this part of the building, it may not be unamuſing to recollect the ſervices which were performed in it, in ancient days, when the monks attended to the rules by which they were bound.

About half-paſt one in the morning, the monks were obliged to riſe, in order to begin the night office, called Nocturnæ Vigiliæ, by two. Immediately after this, they performed the Matutinæ Laudes; the whole taking up about two hours. There was now an interval of an hour, in which they were at liberty to repoſe; though ſome are ſaid to have ſpent the time in private prayer. At five began the ſervice called Prime; at the concluſion of which they went in proceſſion to the

the chapter-houſe, to attend to the inſtructions and admonitions of the abbot. After this, they proceeded again to the church, to aſſiſt at what was called the Capitular Maſs. This being finiſhed, there was an interval of an hour, or hour and half, to be employed in manual labour or ſtudy. At eight they again met in the choir, to perform the office called Terce, or the third hour; which was followed by the High Maſs, and that again by the Sext, or the office of the ſixth hour. Theſe ſervices laſted till near ten o'clock; at which time, when it was not a faſting-day, they proceeded to the refectory to dine. They returned after dinner, in proceſſion, to the church, to finiſh their ſolemn grace. There was now about an hour of relaxation, in which they might repoſe, or walk. At one o'clock, None, or the ninth hour, was ſung; as were Veſpers at three. At five, they met in the refectory for ſupper; which was to conſiſt chiefly of what was left at noon; except on faſting-days, when very little was allowed to be taken. The intermediate ſpaces were to be occupied with reading, ſtudy, manual labour, and tranſcribing books.

books.* After the evening refection, a ſpiritual conference or collation was held, until the office called Complin began; which, with other ſervices, laſted till ſeven o'clock; when all retired to their reſpective dormitories, which were long galleries, containing as many beds as could be ranged in them, ſeparated from each other by thin boards or curtains. On theſe they took their reſt, without undreſſing themſelves. †

Though

* Perhaps this was almoſt the only occupation of the monaſtic life, which has proved really beneficial to poſterity; as by this means the Scriptures have been preſerved. But whether we are at all indebted to monks, for our enjoyment of the Bible, is ſurely to be queſtioned. If they preſerved the Scriptures, it was to keep them in their own hands, and to monopolize the interpretation. Had they foreſeen the reformation, they had never employed their pens in this way. The benefit we derive from their labours, muſt be aſcribed to the Author of all Good, making uſe of them as his unconſcious inſtruments, and leading them eventually to promote a cauſe, the fartheſt from their wiſhes. To ſuppoſe that God could not have preſerved his own revelation, without the aſſiſtance of monks, is no better than blaſphemy.

† Milner's Hiſt. Win. ii. 100, 101.—We cannot but contraſt with all this "will worſhip," the admirable deſcription of family devotion, which a ſweet Scotch poet has given us; and which concludes with the following ſtanzas:

"Then kneeling down to Heaven's eternal King,
The ſaint, the father, and the huſband prays:
Hope ſprings exulting on triumphant wing,
That thus they all ſhall meet in future days:
There ever baſk in uncreated rays,
No more to ſigh, or ſhed the bitter tear,
Together hymning their Creator's praiſe,
In ſuch ſociety, yet ſtill more dear,
While circling time moves round in an eternal ſphere.

"Compared

Though it was in this manner the monks were enjoined to paſs their time, there is no reaſon to think they paid much attention to their rules, even a ſhort time after their firſt inſtitution. We have it from an early writer of their own, that in his days, "all the monkiſh and regular orders, which began with ſo much fervour and zeal, had ſo far by degrees fallen off from the rules of their fathers, that they had nothing left among them but their mere vows." *

And even had they kept their vows, and performed all theſe *devotions*, how far ſuch a courſe of life could be pleaſing to God, or beneficial to man, let common ſenſe determine. Whether ſuch a variety of ceremonious ſervices can be reconciled with the ſimplicity

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"Compared with this, how poor religion's pride,
In all the pomp of method and of art,
When men diſplay, to congregations wide,
Devotion's every grace, except the heart!
The Power incenſed the pageant will deſert,
The pompous ſtrain, the ſacerdotal ſtole;
But haply in ſome cottage far apart,
May hear, well pleaſed, the language of the ſoul,
And in his book of life the inmates poor enroll."——
Vide The Cottager's Saturday Evening, by Robert Burns.

* S. Antonin. tit. 16, c. 23, ſ. 1, 2.—Stillingfleet's Anſwer to Creſſy, p. 207.

of

of the goſpel, or whether ſo many reiterated oriſons can be reſcued from the claſs of "long prayers and vain repetitions," let the Bible judge. Reaſon and revelation concur in repreſenting Him with whom we have to do, in matters of religion, as ſearching the hearts of his worſhippers, and ſatisfied only with that ſervice, in which the heart is engaged. But we hope there is little neceſſity for taking up theſe points at preſent. Happy would it be for our times, had we no more to dread from infidelity and profaneneſs, than from ſuperſtition.

But all the long ſervices of Netley church are now at an end. Maſſes of ruin cover the pavement, ſo often paced by the cuſtomary feet of the mechanical devotees. The ſcream of the daw, terrified by the approach of ſtrangers, ſucceeds the ſolemn chantings of the choir; and is undoubtedly more favourably regarded by Him who careth for the ſparrow, and heareth the young ravens when they cry, than were the unmeaning and heartleſs prayers with which Netley walls heretofore reſounded.

"No more, obſcured in barbarous tone,
The altar hears the myſtic rite;
No more ſhall prayer, in tongue unknown,
The vainly liſtening ear invite."

We have ſeen a curious ancient monumental plate, which was formerly, it is probable, affixed to a tomb in the church at Netley. It repreſents a knight and his lady, kneeling, with a ſcroll proceeding from each of their mouths. On that of the knight, is inſcribed in Latin, a quotation from one of the pſalms:---"This one thing will I aſk of the Lord, that I may dwell in the houſe of the Lord:" on that of the lady, another quotation, ſignifying,---"My heart ſaid unto thee---Thy face will I ſeek."

The plate, which meaſures about eighteen by twenty inches, is ornamented with ſeveral emblems, ſome of which ſeem deſigned to repreſent roſes and thiſtles. There is alſo, ſeveral times repeated, a beacon encircled with a ſcroll, bearing the inſcription "So have I cauſe;" which, a gentleman of great ſkill in theſe matters informs us, is the creſt of the Bekingtons, and of the Comptons; which laſt

is

is a Hampſhire family. Sir Henry Compton, who died about 1589, married a daughter of Francis Haſtings, Earl of Huntingdon; and this may have occaſioned ſome of the Comptons (who have alſo monuments in Ringwood chancel) to have been buried in this abbey church.

The plate we have mentioned, appears to be a compoſition of copper and ſome other metal. It is very hard; as may well be believed, when the reader is informed, that it ſerved many years as a back to a fire-place; notwithſtanding which, it is ſtill very perfect.

It was ſold, a conſiderable time ago, to a tradeſman of Southampton, much obſcured with filth and ruſt, as a piece of old metal. He gave it to a friend, whom curioſity induced to clean it; and it has ſince been carefully preſerved.

Behind the abbey was a garden, which is ſtill incloſed. At the end of it, is an old building, containing ſeveral apartments, in a ſtate of extreme ruin; of which we are unable to point out the uſe.

The abbey appears to have been formerly ſurrounded by a moat, which may ſtill be partly traced.

At a ſhort diſtance above the abbey, are two ponds. The firſt of them is nearly ſquare, delightfully edged with undergrowth, backed by flouriſhing oaks. The upper pond is highly beautiful, being free from weeds, partly overhung by fine trees, but open to the right, towards the adjoining farm-houſe; in which quarter a gently ſloping field riſes from its edge. Theſe ponds formerly ſupplied the monaſtery with fiſh.

Netley Fort ſtands on the ſhore at a little diſtance from the abbey. There is nothing remarkable in its conſtruction. It has been ignorantly ſuppoſed, by ſome, to have been connected with the abbey, and intended for its defence; but it was not erected till the time of Henry VIII., when he built Calſhot and the other caſtles in this neighbourhood. There are good water views from the fort.

A different walk may be had, in the return from Netley, by taking a path to the right, in the wood through which we firſt approached the

the abbey; which leads us into a road, at Tuckleford Pond, conducting to Itchen Ferry.

Thoſe who prefer the ride to Netley, croſs Northam Bridge, and take the direct road as far as the common; whence turning to the right, they preſently enter a lane, leading to Pear-tree Green. Immediately beyond the church, the road takes another lane; through which, avoiding a turn on the left, we paſs to a common; and, ſtill inclining to the right, ſhortly reach the Hamble road. About a mile and a half farther, on the right, a road leads to Netley.

NETLEY ABBEY:

AN ELEGY.

By GEORGE KEATE, ESQ.

Horrendum sylvis et religione parentum. VIRG.

NETLEY ABBEY:

AN ELEGY.

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NETLEY ABBEY:

An ELEGY.

A HALCYON calm has lull'd the watery plain,
The unmoving canvaſs flags beſide the maſt,
The gliding bark ſcarce cleaves the unruffled main,
Tho' fond Impatience bids each zephyr haſte.—

Such ſtillneſs yields the general hour of reſt;
Such peaceful waftage to the faint is given,
When, from life's tumults haſtening to be bleſt,
He meets the ſmile of unoffended Heaven!

Now light upſprings the breeze, the ſails unfold,
The ready crew the favouring gale improve,
The ſun-bright current flames with waving gold,
And each broad ſhore and foreſt ſeems to move.

I hail

I hail at laſt theſe ſhades, this well-known wood,
That ſkirts with verdant ſlope the barren ſtrand,
Where NETLEY's ruins, bordering on the flood,
Forlorn in melancholy greatneſs ſtand.

How changed, alas! from that revered abode,
Graced by proud majeſty in ancient days,
When monks recluſe theſe ſacred pavements trod,
And taught the unletter'd world its MAKER's praiſe!

Now ſunk, deſerted, and with weeds o'ergrown,
Yon proſtrate walls their harder fate bewail;
Low on the ground their topmoſt ſpires are thrown,
Once friendly marks to guide the wandering ſail.

The ivy now with rude luxuriance bends
Its tangled foliage through the cloiſter'd ſpace,
O'er the green window's mouldering height aſcends,
And fondly claſps it with a laſt embrace.

Where burn the gorgeous altar's laſting fires?
Where frowns the dreadful ſanctuary now?
No more religion's awful flame aſpires!
No more the aſylum guards the fated brow!

No

No more ſhall Charity, with ſparkling eyes,
And ſmiles of welcome, wide unfold the door,
Where Pity, liſtening ſtill to Nature's cries,
Befriends the wretched, and relieves the poor!

No more theſe hoary wilds, theſe darkening groves,
To vocal bands return the note of praiſe,
Whoſe chiefs (as ſlow the long proceſſion moves)
On the rear'd croſs with adoration gaze!—

And while, to neighbouring waves, the unwonted ſhow,
Each parting bough and opening glade reveals,
The awe-ſtruck ſailor checks the haſtening prow,
Suſpends his oar, and wonders what he feels.——

Thus muſing, oft I pace the moſs-grown iſle,
Each low-brow'd vault, each dark receſs explore;
While the bleak wind howls through the ſhatter'd pile,
Or wave hoarſe-murmuring breaks along the ſhore.

No other ſounds, amid theſe arches heard,
The death-like ſilence of their gloom moleſt,
Save the ſhrill plaints of ſome unſocial bird,
That ſeeks the houſe of ſolitude to reſt.

Save when their tinkling leaders, to the ſhade
Of theſe cool grots, invite the fleecy folds,
Where oft the fated ox, ſupinely laid,
With lowing herds a diſtant converſe holds!

Or where the Gothic pillar's ſlender form
(Unequal to the incumbent quarry's weight)
Deſerts its poſt, and, reeling to the ſtorm,
With ſullen craſh reſigns its charge to Fate.

While the ſelf-planted oak, within confined
(Auxiliar to the tempeſt's wild uproar),
Its giant branches fluctuates to the wind,
And rends the wall whoſe aid it courts no more.

Here too (belief could old tradition claim)
Where ſwells the rocky mound in ſhapeleſs heaps
(His name now loſt, his guilt divulged by Fame),
Some rude diſmantler of this abbey ſleeps.

Long, long in thought the patient earth he curſed,
That bore the fabric's then unbroken ſpires;
Long wiſh'd the power to bid volcanos burſt,
Or call from heaven thought-executing fires.

" Wide

"Wide wave," he cried, "all bright with golden grain,
"The neighbouring vales, while this proud cumbrous maſs
"For many a barren furlong chills the plain,
"And draws with idle zeal the crowds that paſs:

"No more the votaries of each time-ſhook pile,
"As Ruin's heirs, ſhall call theſe ſhades their own;
"For blazon'd arms explore the pageant iſle,
"Or ſearch dark regiſters of faithleſs ſtone."

He ſpoke,—reſolved.—The menaced arches frown'd,
The conſcious walls in ſudden conflict join'd,
Cruſh'd the pale wretch in one promiſcuous wound,
And left this monument of wrath behind.——

Scenes ſuch as theſe, with ſalutary change,
O'er flattering life their melancholy caſt;
Teach the free thoughts on wings of air to range,
O'erlook the preſent, and recall the paſt!——

Here pious beadſmen, from the world retired,
In bliſsful viſions wing'd their ſouls to heaven;
While future joys their ſober tranſports fired,
They wept their erring days, and were forgiven.

Their blameleſs race ſucceeding, in theſe cells,
Ere death impoſed the leſſon, learn'd to die;
Alike forgot, no raiſed memorial tells
In which lone ſpot their kindred aſhes lie!

Mute is the matin bell, whoſe early call
Warn'd the grey fathers from their humble beds;
No midnight taper gleams along the wall,
Or round the ſculptured ſaint its radiance ſheds!

No martyr's ſhrine its high-wrought gold diſplays,
To bid the wondering zealot hither roam;
No relick here the pilgrim's toil o'erpays,
And cheers his footſteps to a diſtant home!

Still twilight now its ſhade advancing throws,
Faint in the weſt the day's laſt bluſh is ſeen;
On night's dim front the ſtar of evening glows,
And gilds with diſtant beams the ſolemn ſcene.

Illuſion now repeoples all the void,
From death recalls the venerable train
{Whoſe thoughts no more earth's trivial cares employ'd},
To tread their ancient bounds, and weep again.

Swift

Swift as her wiſh, the embodied ſhades appear;
O'er paths much changed, with doubtful ſtep they walk;
Each eye rolls faſt the viſionary tear,
And liſtening Fancy thinks ſhe hears them talk.

"Say, reverend forms, in contemplation's hour,
"While life ſerene its golden current roll'd,
"Did no kind warning, no prophetic power,
"This ravaged manſion's future woes unfold?

"Did ye ne'er think the page of joy would cloſe?
"Ne'er dread a royal plunderer's mighty hand?
"Your exiled order's yet unnumber'd woes,
"Their name extinguiſh'd, and their rites profaned?"

Silent they paſs,——then, fading like a dream,
To ſeek their lone unhonour'd graves return;
Yet fleeting they bequeath a ſigh, and ſeem
With me theſe violated groves to mourn.——

Yon parted roofs, that nod aloft in air,
The threatening battlement, the rifted tower,
The choir's looſe fragments ſcatter'd round, declare,
Inſulting TIME, the triumphs of thy power!

Shall man, unwarn'd, ſurvey with preſcient ſmile
Of long futurity the plann'd abode?——
Vain augur, turn!——behold where ſinks the pile
A monarch raiſed in honour of his GOD!

Low lies that ſceptred founder's holy head,
Whoſe virtues bade theſe friendly walls aſcend;
Applauding angels graced his dying bed,
And Hope's bright dawn roſe cloudleſs on his end!

Lamented prince!——for Mercy's taſk he knew;
The reins of lengthen'd empire gently ſway'd;
He raiſed the ſuppliant tribe his ſire o'erthrew,
And round his bier each grateful convent pray'd.

Not ſo retired fell JOHN's indignant ſoul,——
For him no vows the doom of Heaven oppoſed;
Inſulted prieſthood mix'd the envenom'd bowl,
And death his eyes in howling anguiſh cloſed.

Unſteady ruler of a nation's helm!
Long ſtruggling Freedom own'd thy hard command;
Till fierce in arms thy BARONS ſhook the realm,
And tore the CHARTER from thy lingering hand!

Peace

Peace guard their duſt!—their merits glory crown!—
Too far their worth tranſports the roving Muſe;
Who kindles at the tale of old renown,
Nor dares the ſtrain to Liberty refuſe.——

And now——farewell, ye walls, ye roofs ſublime,
Ye lengthening choirs, a venerable gloom!
And when, like you, your Poet bows to time,
In yon dim cloiſter yield his aſhes room!

His hopes ne'er roſe to emulate the dead,
Whoſe dear-bought trophies crowd the venal fane,
Where ſculptured MARS may wreath the coward's head,
Or TRUTH's bright form o'er perjured duſt complain.

Midſt life's gay ſcenes your calm retreats he loved,
Your wreſted pomp his artleſs numbers mourn.——
Where, led by choice, his penſive footſteps roved,
May Friendſhip place, and you protect his urn!——

Could aught yet more endear your circling wood,
It is, ARDELIA! unconſtrain'd and free,
That here, reflecting on life's ſum of good,
My breaſt firſt heaved an anxious ſigh for thee!

You too, YE FAIR, of neighbouring ſcenes the grace
(Whoſe envied praiſe the Bard adventurous ſeeks),
Once deign to viſit this ſequeſter'd place;
Inſtruction's voice amidſt the ruin ſpeaks!

Whence claim they praiſe, theſe piles, which ſtrewn on earth
(A ſteril burthen), mock their former ſtate?
'Tis from remembrance of their youthful worth;——
They once were beautiful!—they once were great!

Thoſe charms alone ſurvive that deck the heart,
Command reſpect which growing years increaſe,
Bloom when the roſes from the cheek depart,
And ebbing life's tumultuous raptures ceaſe!

Forgive the Muſe, if, with preſumptuous love,
She woos your ears to attend her moral lay;
Leſt faithleſs to themſelves your pleaſures prove,
And uſeleſs time ſteal unimproved away!

For, know, your boſoms feed a flame as bright
As cheers a dying CATO's lateſt hour,
A youthful AMMON warms to lead the fight,
Or lights a JULIUS to the goal of power!

Oh!

Oh! truſt not then the force of radiant eyes,
Thoſe ſhort-lived glories of your ſportive band;——
Pleaſed with its ſtars, though laughing morn ariſe,
A ſteadier beam meridian ſkies demand!

Reflect, ere (victor of each lovely frame)
TIME bids the external fleeting graces fade,
'Tis Reaſon's baſe ſupports the nobleſt claim,
'Tis Senſe preſerves the conqueſts Beauty made!

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BRIT.
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